

DOCTORAL DISSERTATION SUMMARY

Far-right Movements and Political Parties in Italy (1992-2011)

The main research objective of this dissertation was to analyse contemporary Italian right-wing radicalism, in particular the platform, culture and form of activity of Italian far-right movements and political parties. The study has identified and characterised elements borrowed by far-right groups from historical Fascism and shows their role in the construction of these groups' identities.

The subject matter of the dissertation is the origin and evolution of far-right movements and parties in Italy between 1992 and 2011. The author has combined two theories as a basis for analysis and a tool for understanding the determinants of the transformation of the Italian social life and political arena and the success of the far right: the Political Opportunity Structure (POS) and the Discursive Opportunity Structure (DOS).

The structure of the work is determined by the subject matter. The dissertation opens with posing research questions, defining the period of interest, and presenting its structure along with references and works cited. The theoretical part presents the theories relied on in the work and characterises the main determinants of historical Fascism, which inform the platform of the new Italian extreme right addressed in the following chapters.

To provide a broader background, the dissertation includes a characterisation of the myth of *italiani brava gente* and the paradigms on which the system of the First Republic was built, as well as a description of the circumstances and political changes within the party system in Italy in the 1990s. The study addresses the platform, roots and transformations of the far-right political parties and movements active in the Italian political arena in the period in question. To understand the determinants of development and the viability of the new extreme right, one needs to examine the cultural and social context of such groups' activities – cinema as a participant in the Italian collective memory and music in its sound, but also discourse. The study ends with a reflection on football stadiums as an 'invisible religion' of Fascism, a ritual and a place where the new extreme right community is formed and operates.

The dissertation concludes by answering the research questions posed and proving the thesis. Extreme-right movements and political parties operating in the Italian political arena since the 1990s have referred to the ideology of Fascism using the latest methods of communication, adjusting the forms of their activity to current socio-political needs and opportunities. The analysis of the far right is not limited to the study of fringe groups or movements celebrating the myths of the past, but serves to observe communities that embrace the culture of Fascism as a normal phenomenon. The dissertation stresses Italy's role as a sort of Petri dish for studying changes in Europe, where the Fascist taboo was broken for the first time, allowing the political heirs of Fascism to enter the stage.